



Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition (PLAR)

Date Approved: May 2018

Effective Date: September 1, 2018

Date Reviewed:

Replaces: N/A

Purpose

This policy provides the criteria for demonstrating, evaluating and acknowledging prior student learning and/or experience that may be deemed equivalent to current Cambrian College course learning outcomes.

Definitions

Life Experience: Experiences such as self-directed study, paid employment, volunteer work and other learning experiences.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR): Refers to the identification, assessment and recognition of skills that results in the granting of course credit based on the formal demonstration of prior learning acquired through self-directed study, work, volunteer work or life experience. Numeric grades received for PLAR will be included in the calculation of a student's grade point average.

Subject Matter Expert: Staff with expertise in the subject who may conduct/provide PLAR assessment

Candidate: Refers to any PLAR applicant who is 18 years of age or older.

Transfer Credit: Is granted when a student has successfully completed a course or courses from an accredited and recognized post-secondary institution that is/are evaluated as equivalent to (a) Cambrian course(s).

Application/ Scope

All current students and potential future students.

Policy Statements

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) is based on the belief that adults may acquire college level learning through life experience such as self-directed study, paid employment, volunteer work and other learning experiences. In order for this learning to be credited, it must be described or demonstrated and deemed equivalent and current when compared to course or program learning outcomes.

PLAR is to be distinguished from the transfer of academic credit mechanism, in that PLAR focuses on the evaluation of experiential learning rather than on the determination of equivalency of formal educational courses and/or programs.

Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) assess PLAR candidate's prior learning. If the SME deems the learning is equivalent to College course learning requirements, the College awards credit(s) with grade values.



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Candidate Eligibility

- Candidates interested in pursuing a Cambrian College credential who, through work and life experience, have acquired learning that may be equivalent to the course learning outcomes of one or more College course(s).
- Candidates must be at least 18 years of age.
- Candidates are not required to be registered Cambrian College students.

Candidate Requirements

- Candidates must fulfill assessment requirements within three months of an application.
- PLAR candidates must go through the regular admission process to gain entrance into a College program.

PLAR Limitations

- Candidates are bound by the College's residency rule that states that, for any credential, a minimum of 25% of a program must be taken and successfully completed at the College.
- A student cannot complete PLAR for a course for which they do not have the prerequisite(s) or other requirement(s) unless approval is granted by the Program Coordinator or Academic Administrator responsible for the course.
- A student cannot complete PLAR for a course which they have previously audited.
- A student who has successfully completed a course via regular delivery cannot register for PLAR to achieve a better grade.
- A student who has not successfully completed a course via regular delivery cannot register for PLAR to achieve a passing grade.
- Wherever possible, PLAR shall be available to candidates. Where PLAR is not possible in a particular course, it shall be clearly documented on the course outline.

PLAR Results

- PLAR grades will be made available to Candidates at the end of the semester in which the assessment was completed.
- PLAR grades are included in the calculation of the candidate's grade point average (GPA).
- An "F" or "Fail" grade for a PLAR will not appear on a candidate's transcript. These will only appear on a grade report.

PLAR Fees

- Fees are set within the tuition policy directives of the Ministry of Advanced Education Skills Development. These fees are charged over and above full-time fees, and are payable prior to any assessment. Fees are non-refundable and non-transferable irrespective of outcome.
- An application and remittance of fees for PLAR credit consideration must normally be submitted prior to the course start date, and no later than the last date for registrants to withdraw without academic penalty.

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Responsibilities and Accountability

Pathways Officer:

- Acts as the central PLAR coordinator for all PLAR related College Activities.
- Supports students and prospective students in matters related to PLAR
- Supports Subject Matter Experts in matters related to PLAR
- Promotes and monitors PLAR procedures across the College
- Manages PLAR data and reporting, including maintaining PLAR records
- Coordinates communication between the Pathways Office, staff, faculty and students regarding PLAR

Academic Departments/Programs:

- Assigns a PLAR Program Contact to liaise between the Pathways Office and faculty as necessary.
- Makes available Subject Matter Experts to determine appropriate assessment methods for candidates, grade assessments and submits the results.

Students:

- Check their enrolment status when applying for PLAR. Receiving PLAR credit may affect a student's course load, which in turn may affect fees and eligibility for OSAP, scholarships, bursaries and other sponsorships.
- Initiate the PLAR process and all subsequent requirements and submissions.

Related Procedures

Add Drop Courses

PLAR Process

PLAR Student Guide

PLAR Self-Assessment

Related Policies / Directives / Regulations

Student Appeal Policy

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Standing and Promotion Policy

Advanced Standing and Transfer Credit Policy

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities – Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition Resource Document